



# Town of Hopkinton

Office of Select Board

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**SELECT BOARD  
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES  
Monday, November 29, 2021  
Draft**

## CALL TO ORDER

Chair Sabrina Dunlap called this Budget Work Session meeting of the Select Board to order at 5:31 p.m. on Monday, November 29, 2021. With the meeting being held at Town Hall, Chair Dunlap introduced the members of the Board.

## Select Board

**Members Present:** Sabrina Dunlap, Ken Traum, Anna Wells, Jeffrey Donohoe, and Steven Whitley

**Staff Present:** Neal Cass, Town Administrator, and Cara Johnson, Administrative/Assessing Assistant

**Public Present:** Cam Burgess, Kim Burgess, Jay Burgess, and Norm Goupil

## Town of Hopkinton - Select Board Consent Agenda November 29, 2021

<b>Item</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Comment</b>
<b>AP MANIFEST</b>			
AP Manifest dated 11/29/2021 ch #s 67216 - 67236	11/29/2021	Approve	\$1,716,336.32
<b>CURRENT USE</b>			
208-088-000 1074 Pine Street	11/29/2021	Approve	
<b>OTHER</b>			
Personnel Action Form James H. Burdette (new hire - full-time)	11/29/2021	Approve	

## ADMINISTRATIVE:

The Board reviewed documents for signature, and approved (5-0) the Consent Agenda, taking the following action on a motion made by Mr. Traum and seconded by Mr. Whitley.

**VOTE:** Dunlap, Traum, Wells, Donohoe, and Whitley voting in favor of the motion, no votes against; **MOTION PASSED 5-0.**

The Board reviewed the Public Meeting Minutes of Monday, November 22, 2021. Mr. Traum made a motion, seconded by Mr. Whitley, to approve the Public Meeting Minutes of November 22, 2021.

**VOTE:** Dunlap, Traum, Wells, Donohoe, and Whitley, voting in favor of the motion, no votes against; **MOTION PASSED 5-0.**

**PUBLIC APPOINTMENT:** Cam Burgess, a member of Hopkinton Boy Scout Troop 77, presented his proposed project to earn the rank of Eagle Scout. Focusing on improving access and safety for hikers, bikers, snowshoers, and cross-country skiers using the bridge in the Hawthorne Town Forest, Mr. Burgess presented a video with detailed plans for the new bridge and a photo of the existing bridge, explaining his intention to remove the old bridge, which is 10 feet long by 3 feet wide, and replace it with the new bridge, which will be 12 feet long by 4 feet wide. Mr. Traum, Mr. Donohoe, and Mr. Whitley inquired about the timing, who would be completing all the work, and the financing of the project, and Mr. Burgess indicated his plan is to start in the spring and estimated he would need approximately 5-6 days of working with friends, family, and other scouts, to complete the project. He went on to say that he will be doing some fundraising and seeking donations from regional lumber and hardware stores. Chair Dunlap complimented Mr. Burgess on his thorough and detailed plan and noted what a great idea his project is. Mr. Cass pointed out how fortunate Hopkinton is to have so many Eagle Scout projects completed by its residents. With no further questions, Mr. Burgess and the Board exchanged thanks.

**BUDGET DISCUSSION:** With regard to budget updates, Mr. Cass noted the good news that, after the auditors had completed their work, the Fund Balance came in at \$1.8 million, instead of \$1.4 million, which was the original figure, and that the figure that can be used to offset 2022 taxes is estimated at \$200,000.00. Focusing on the Town employee health insurance line, Mr. Cass pointed out that, while there are appointments scheduled to discuss options with the companies that provide coverage, he feels keeping the figure for next year essentially the same as this year will be fine. Moving through to the next line with any notable changes, Mr. Cass pointed out that the auditors suggested establishing a payroll liability trust fund, so when employees retire, the impact of paying out vacation days doesn't fall entirely on the budget; he added that if this fund were not established next year, it would be a good idea in coming years. Mr. Traum asked to confirm that this was a recommendation of the auditors, and Mr. Cass confirmed that it was a recommendation not a requirement. After the changes, Mr. Cass showed that the lower figure to be raised through taxes totals \$317,386.00. Regarding Mr. Traum's inquiry about ARPA (the American Rescue Plan Act) funds, Mr. Cass emphasized that \$200,000.00 from these funds would be used to lower the road salt and shimming and paving lines of the budget. Mr. Traum and Mr. Whitley noted the importance of showing that these funds were from ARPA and Mr. Cass indicated he could add an ARPA sheet to the proposal. With regard to the Police Department figure on the training line item, a brief discussion among Mr. Cass the Board members ensued, and it was noted that the training request seemed higher than it should, and, based on figures since 2017, the Board agreed that \$5,500.00 would be a more realistic amount than \$11,063.00. Regarding the figures that will be presented to the Budget Committee next week, Mr. Traum pointed out that there will be a 5.33% increase. Mr. Whitley added that he is in favor of the warrant article to create a payroll liability trust fund, and contributing to it beginning next year, and Chair Dunlap agreed. Chair Dunlap pointed out that all the departments had done an excellent job with their presentations and commended Mr. Cass for spearheading this project. The Board unanimously endorsed the work done on the budget.

**OTHER BUSINESS:** Mr. Cass announced that the Tyler Bridge is officially open, and it was completed on time and just under budget; the Board and Mr. Cass expressed how pleased they are with

a job well done. Mr. Cass also pointed out that the Rescue Building is empty, the electricity is off, and the water is off and drained.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cara Johnson  
Administrative/Assessing Assistant